

# UPDATE

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## **Weight Control: Choosing the Right Diet to Lose Weight**

### **What kind of diet will help me lose weight?**

Many diets can help you lose weight. However, "going on a diet" is not the best answer to losing weight. Usually you gain the weight back after you "go off" the diet. If you want to lose weight and keep it off, you have to change much more than just what you eat. You have to change how and when you eat, and you have to start exercising or exercise more often. Most people who lose weight and keep it off do 3 things. First, they find out why they are overweight. Second, they follow a healthy eating plan. Third, they exercise regularly.

### **What kind of diet should I follow?**

You should follow a healthy diet that you like and that you can stick to. The diet should be low in fats and sugars, and high in fiber.

Your doctor or a nutritionist can give you advice on what kinds of foods are healthy choices. Remember to watch portion sizes. A healthy portion of meat is the size of a deck of cards. A healthy portion of rice or pasta is about the size of your fist. Most restaurants tend to double or even triple these amounts.

Read the nutrition labels on foods before you buy them. If you need help understanding the labels, ask your doctor or a nutritionist to explain them.

### **Won't it be hard to change my diet?**

It might be hard, and it will also take time, so try not to get discouraged. Your effort will be worth it. The key is to keep trying to eat the right foods. The following are a few suggestions to help you change your diet:

- Make small, slow changes. Then it will be easier to make the changes a part of your everyday life.
- Every few days, write down what you eat and drink that day. Use this record to help you see if you need to eat more from any food groups, such as fruits, vegetables, or low-fat dairy products.
- Ask for help from your family doctor or a nutritionist, especially if you have a medical problem that requires a special diet.
- Read the nutrition labels on foods before you buy them. If you need help understanding the labels, ask your doctor or a nutritionist to explain them.

